

*\$435,500 Award Will Increase Connectivity, Encourage Economic Development*

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**WASHINGTON – U.S. Senators Jeff Bingaman and Tom Udall and U.S. Rep. Harry Teague** today announced that Dell Telephone Cooperative will receive a \$435,500 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grant to expand access to broadband services in southern New Mexico.

The grant will allow the cooperative to provide broadband Internet and improved phone services to residents of the Bug Scuffle community of Otero County. The grant is one of 126 new Recovery Act broadband infrastructure projects that will create jobs and provide rural residents in 38 states and Native American tribal areas access to improved service.

“Expanding broadband technology is very good for our state’s long-term economic security. But this investment in a broadband expansion in southern New Mexico is especially important because it is helping create to jobs at a time when we need them most,” **Bingaman** said.

“Access to broadband encourages economic development in a community the same way the creation of the interstate system did more than half a century ago,” **Udall** said. “Bringing broadband to rural communities means bringing essential services and encouraging economic growth that will provide a strong foundation for decades to come. Rural New Mexico deserves the same access to broadband Internet that larger cities have.”

“In an age where access to broadband internet can drastically expand the number of

opportunities and resources available to a community, it is critical that we work to extend broadband access to the many rural regions of southern New Mexico that still consider internet access a luxury,” **Teague** said. “I am encouraged to see Recovery Act funds being used to provide these resources to promote economic growth and create more job opportunities throughout the community and look forward to Dell Telephone broadening the range of this essential utility in southern New Mexico.”

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